



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
MANUAL OF SECURITY
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Chapter 26 - Safeguarding North Atlantic Treaty Organization Information

2601 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to establish and issue the guidance, criteria, and procedures required to ensure Department of Commerce compliance with the implementation of United States Security Authority for North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Affairs Instruction 1-69, and United States implementation of NATO Security Procedures.

2602 NATO Classified Information

A. United States Security Authority for NATO Affairs (USSAN) provides for United States implementation of NATO Security Procedures. When NATO or COSMIC precedes a classification, the material is the property of NATO, but the information remains the property of the originator. The determination as to whether or not a U.S. document is to be released to NATO-member countries is the responsibility of the originator in compliance with the U.S. need-to-know principle. Classified information incorporated into NATO remains the property of the originator and may not be given to any non-NATO nation or to any other international organization except by the originator.

B. NATO has four levels of classified information: **COSMIC Top Secret (CTS)**, **NATO Secret (NS)**, **NATO Confidential (NC)**, and **NATO Restricted (NR)**, defined as follows.

1. **COSMIC TOP SECRET.** This security classification concerns information where the unauthorized disclosure would result in, or could reasonably be expected to result in, exceptionally grave damage to NATO. The marking COSMIC is applied only to Top Secret documents prepared for circulation within NATO. COSMIC is a marking which, when applied to a document, signifies:

a. The document is the property of NATO and may not be passed outside the organization except by the originator or with the originator's consent; and



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b. The document is subject to the special security protection outlined in USSAN 1-69.

2. **NATO SECRET.** This security classification concerns information where the unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause grave damage to NATO. NATO Secret is a word which, when applied to a document, signifies:

a. The document is the property of NATO and if bearing a security classification may not be passed outside the organization except under conditions outlined in USSAN 1-69, Attachment 1, Enclosure 2, Paragraph 3, and Annexes 1 and 2; and

b. The document, if bearing a security classification, is subject to the security protection outlined in USSAN 1-69.

3. **NATO CONFIDENTIAL.** This security classification denotes information where the unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause damage to NATO.

4. **NATO RESTRICTED.** This security classification concerns information where the unauthorized disclosure would be prejudicial to the interests of NATO. The United States does not have a security classification equivalent to NATO Restricted, therefore, documents marked NATO Restricted will be protected in accordance with the requirements of **A**For Official Use Only@information. Documents originated by NATO that are marked Restricted shall be marked with the following additional notation, **A**To be safeguarded in accordance with United States Security Authority for NATO (USSAN) Instruction 1-69.@

C. The USSAN Instruction 1-69, An Implementation of NATO Security Procedures, is issued for compliance throughout the Department by employees who handle NATO classified material and information. The Office of Security maintains a copy of this instruction.

2603 Other NATO Information

A. **NATO UNCLASSIFIED.** This marking is applied to NATO information that does not require security protection. NATO Unclassified may be handled as U.S. Unclassified.

B. **ATOMAL.** This marking is applied to either U.S. Restricted Data or Formerly Restricted Data or United Kingdom Atomic information that has been officially released to NATO. **ATOMAL** information is classified



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COSMIC TOP SECRET ATOMAL (CTSA), NATO SECRET ATOMAL (NSA), or NATO CONFIDENTIAL ATOMAL (NCA), depending on the damage that would result from unauthorized disclosure.



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2604 Commerce NATO Subregistry

- A.** All NATO documents forwarded to the Department of Commerce are received by the subregistry located in the Office of Security headquarters in Washington, D.C. The subregistry is the primary point-of-contact for accountability and control of all NATO documents received by the Department.
- B.** The Department has several approved control points for accountability, control, and storage of NATO material. The servicing security officer or the Office of Security should be contacted to obtain a listing of the departmental control points.

2605 Security Clearance Requirements for NATO

A. Access.

1. Access to NATO classified information requires a final U.S. security clearance at the equivalent classification level (i.e., access to NATO Cosmic Top Secret requires a U.S. Top Secret security clearance and access to NATO Secret information requires a U.S. Secret security clearance). Access to NATO classified information must be limited to the minimum number of personnel who require such access to do their assigned duties. The subregistry maintains a list of all Department of Commerce personnel cleared for NATO access. Each NATO Control Point shall maintain a roster of personnel cleared for NATO access. Verification of NATO access shall be obtained from the NATO subregistry located in the Office of Security.
2. Although NATO Unclassified information does not require security protection, it may only be released to non-NATO nations, organization, and individuals when such release would not be against the interest of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Any procedures considered necessary for such release will be decided independently by member nations and NATO commands and agencies.

B. Temporary Access.

1. In wartime or in periods of mounting international tension when emergency measures are required, the Office of Security may, in exceptional circumstances, grant temporary NATO access to personnel who do not possess the requisite security clearance, provided that such authorization is absolutely necessary, and there are no reasonable doubts as to the trustworthiness of the person concerned. Requests for such emergency access must be fully justified and documented.



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2. Whenever such emergency access is granted, a record of the authorization will be made by the Office of Security who will, as soon as possible, institute the procedures necessary to fulfill the normal clearance requirements.

2606 NATO Briefing and Debriefing

A. Before access to information classified NATO Confidential and above is granted, U.S. personnel must receive a NATO security briefing. The Department of Commerce subregistry shall conduct all NATO briefings and maintain copies of all briefing certificates for a minimum of two years from the date of briefing.

B. Uncleared personnel may be authorized access to NATO Restricted information when it is determined there is a need for such access in the performance of official duties. A personnel security clearance for such access is not required, but each person must receive a NATO security briefing.

C. A briefing shall be provided to each person who is exposed to frequent contact with representatives of countries with special security risks. A listing of "countries with special security risks" is provided in USSAN 1-69, Attachment 3, Section VIII. This list is maintained in the Office of Security.

D. Persons who have access to NATO classified information and who intend to travel to or through (including scheduled stop-overs by air travel) countries with special security risks, or to any destination by any form of transport that belongs to, is registered in, or managed from such a country, shall be given a thorough briefing about the security hazards of that country or geographical area before they travel. During the briefing, they will be instructed to report immediately on any occurrence that could have security implications, no matter how unimportant it may seem.

E. When access to classified NATO information is no longer required, personnel will be debriefed. All debriefings must be recorded and shall be maintained by the Department of Commerce sub-registry for a minimum of two years from the date of debriefing.

2607 Storage, Transfer and Destruction of NATO Documents

A. Storage.

1. **NATO Classified Documents.** NATO classified documents shall be stored as prescribed in USSAN Instruction 1-69. NATO documents shall not be commingled with U.S. or other documents.



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NATO documents may be filed in the same drawer as other non-NATO documents if they are segregated and clearly identified as NATO files. All personnel who have access to a security container that is used for the storage of NATO classified information must be cleared at the appropriate level and briefed for NATO access.

2. NATO Restricted Documents. NATO Restricted documents (unclassified material) may be stored in the same manner as prescribed in USSAN Instruction 1-69 and Chapter 41, Sensitive and Administratively Controlled Information. NATO Restricted documents are unclassified and are protected from public access and release as "For Official Use Only" material.

3. COSMIC Top Secret Documents. The Department of Commerce does not have the authority to store COSMIC Top Secret documents.

4. Container Combinations. The combinations of authorized security containers containing NATO classified documents shall be changed on an annual basis in accordance with USSAN Instruction 1-69.

5. Inventory. NATO material classified Secret and above shall be accounted for and inventoried every six months.

B. Packaging and Transmission of NATO Documents.

1. COSMIC TOP SECRET, NATO SECRET, NATO CONFIDENTIAL and all **ATOMAL** documents shall be double-wrapped in the same manner as equivalent U.S. classified documents, except that the inner wrapper shall be marked with the appropriate NATO markings. Documents classified **NATO RESTRICTED** shall be packaged in the same manner as **NATO CONFIDENTIAL** and above. The outer envelope shall be marked, "Postmaster Do Not Forward. Return to Sender."

2. Requirements for the transmission of NATO classified information are contained in USSAN Instruction 1-69, Attachment to Enclosure 2.

C. Destruction of NATO Information.

1. All NATO holdings must be reviewed on a frequent basis to ensure that the number of documents is kept to an absolute minimum necessary for operational purposes.



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2. All NATO classified information must be destroyed in the same manner as prescribed for U.S. classified information in paragraph 2307 of the Security Manual. Handling and destruction of the material shall occur by appropriately cleared personnel with NATO access.

2608 Additional NATO Security Guidance and NATO Marking Instructions

The United States Implementation of NATO Security Procedures, USSAN 1-69 Instruction, prescribes the security procedures for NATO information. The Office of Security maintains a copy of the instruction. Except in those instances where an intelligence source or method would be revealed, portions of United States documents containing foreign government information shall be marked to reflect the country or international organization of origin as well as the appropriate classification, for example: NATO-S for a NATO Secret document, or UK-C for a Confidential document originated from the United Kingdom. For additional guidance on classification markings, see Chapter 20, Marking.